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# CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT

FOR

## Alameda County and Its Cities

Under a System of Boroughs, Whereby Each City Retains Its  
Present Identity and Independence—Fixes Its Own Tax  
Rate, also Controls Borough Expenditures

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### A COMPARISON

OF

The Present System with the Proposed Plan; Showing Advantages  
to be Secured Under Centralized Control  
and Business Management

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### CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT AS A BUSINESS PROPOSITION

Issued by

City and County Government Association

1206 Broadway, Oakland, Cal.

AUGUST, 1916

File this pamphlet for future reference—as you will receive other literature on the subject, and should be prepared to express an opinion on the contemplated plan



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## A COMPARISON

### Showing Why the East Bay Cities and the County Should Unite Under a Federated Cities and County System With a Modern Business Charter for City and County Government

#### CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.

There are **TEN** separate municipal governments in Alameda County. Sometimes they work in harmony and sometimes not, but always without proper co-ordination. The county is superimposed on the municipalities, with a duplicating set of officials and officers.

The valuation of property for assessment purposes for the cities and county is not the same. This results in confusion and inconvenience to the public, and requires the preparation of two delinquent tax rolls.

Co-operation as to matters of common interest is lacking and well nigh impossible.

**At present there are in the cities and the county:**

- 9 Assessors.
- 11 Tax Collectors.
- 11 Treasurers.
- 10 Chief Clerks.
- 4 School Superintendents.
- 5 Auditors.
- 5 Purchasing Agents.
- 59 Districts and departments purchasing supplies.  
(These are in addition to the 5 regular purchasing agents.)
- 3 Chiefs of Police.
- 1 Sheriff.
- 7 Constables.

#### WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.

**One** set of administrative officials under central control.

Each city maintains its present independence and identity; fixes its tax rate and the purposes for which tax money shall be expended; controls the liquor question and police and health regulations.

There will be one valuation of property for all tax assessment purposes and only one delinquent tax roll will be necessary.

Borough boards or councils adopt all policies, but the details thereof are carried out by experts appointed, under civil service, solely for their fitness.

**Under the proposed plan there will be:**

- 1 Assessor.
- 1 Tax Collector and Treasurer.  
(These offices are combined and one office takes the place of 20.)
- 1 Chief Clerk.
- 1 School Superintendent.
- 1 Auditor.
- 1 Purchasing Agent.  
(Will do the work now done by 5 purchasing agents and 59 different bodies.)
- 1 Chief of Police.  
(Will perform the duties of the Sheriff, as well as that of all Chiefs of Police and Constables.)

## CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.

10 City Attorneys and one District Attorney.

Also other duplicating officials.

**Number of Employees** at present in the county and the cities are approximately 4000.

This number and the amount paid annually for salaries are steadily increasing.

There is no single head on whom to fix responsibility. The law ingeniously divides responsibility among all of the elective officers. This results in shifting of blame and inefficiency.

• **At present** there is no "Home Rule" in county affairs. The legislature, almost every session, adds more officers and employees, whether needed or not. The taxpayers must provide funds to pay the salaries.

At the last session the Legislature increased the salary roll of Alameda County approximately \$32,000. This added to the tax rate nearly 1½ cents.

• **Administrative Officers** are now elected not for their fitness, but by reason of their popularity.

Both in the cities and the county, officers are compelled to offer themselves for re-election every two or four years, and are obliged to enter the arena of politics and

## WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.

1 City Attorney and one District Attorney with Deputies will attend to the legal work.

Many other officials and boards, who are now duplicating work, will be eliminated.

Under the proposed plan all officials performing duplicating functions would be eliminated and many other offices would be consolidated, thereby saving hundreds of thousands of dollars annually.

The Proposed City and County charter provides for a manager, who shall be the responsible head of all departments. All administrative officers will be appointed, after qualifying by an examination, instead of being elected.

The Proposed Charter for the city and county will provide for complete "Home Rule," in fixing the number and salaries of all officers and employees.

The people themselves can say what they want and when they want it, instead of leaving it to the Legislature, every two years, to create offices that may or may not be needed, and for which the taxpayer must pay.

Under the proposed system administrative officers, such as the County Clerk and Recorder, Tax Collector, Assessor, etc., are appointed under civil service. They will be trained men, and will have a guaranteed tenure of office as long



## **CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.**

spend a good share of the people's time, paid for at high rates out of the public treasury and money they should use for their own personal needs, in making friends who will assist them in re-election, thus diverting to campaign purposes money and time that neither the candidates nor the people can afford to have thus diverted.

Inefficiency and disorganization are the results.

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• **Under the present system** the supervisors and various city councils have legislative as well as administrative powers. They present the unique spectacle of appropriating money to their own departments, as administrative officers, then spending the money appropriated, then, as a legislative body, approving their own acts.

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• **Under the present system** of separate governments, all manner of prices are paid for supplies by the various purchasing agents.

One purchasing agent pays list price—another buys at retail—and still others buy at wholesale.

There is no standardization of quality, quantity or price.

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• **Under the present system** taxes for benefits and the cost of improvements are increasing out of proportion to the increase in property values. Improvements are made without any definite program as to future requirements, and are not in concert with any uniform plan for all the cities within the county.

## **WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.**

as they "make good." They must devote the whole of their time to the duties of the office and will be under no compulsion to devote time and salaries to campaign requirements.

Tenure of office becomes secure, and efficiency and organization will be the result.

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**The proposed charter** provides that the elected council, or city board, shall have only legislative powers. It may levy the tax, appropriate the money and adopt policies, but the actual carrying out of the policies and the administration of all business is left in the hands of trained experts, under the supervision of the manager.

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**Under a central purchasing system** for the federated cities and county, with a competent purchasing agent in charge, the quality, quantity and prices will be standardized, supplies will be bought in large quantities, and proper discounts from wholesale lists will be obtained.

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**Under the proposed plan** a reduction in taxes will result by city planning for all the cities as a unit, in accordance with a consistent program laid out with a view to future needs and extending over a period of years, as was suggested by Dr. Werner Hegemann, who made a survey of the East Bay Cities.

## CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.

• **Employees of the County**, as well as in many of the cities, are not under civil service and are subject to change at each election. This condition produces a lack of interest in their work and keeps them continually in politics. Can such a system be anything but inefficient?

**At present** there is no uniform standard for the school departments of the various cities and districts in the county. One department provides for a given activity in one way, and another for the same activity in another way. There are several boards and several school superintendents, thus causing a heavy overhead cost.

• **The Purchasing Power** of the "Tax Dollar" is decreasing each year, as is evidenced by the increasing tax rate.

• **Citizens under our present system** are compelled to pay taxes on the same piece of property at separate times and at different places. The tax rate is based upon different valuations, these valuations being often estimated by "rule of thumb."

**We have now** in the county and in the cities some 10 justices of the peace and police judges. Some of the judges put in about one-third time, others half time, but all draw full pay. The justices and police judges are elected; report to no superior; and hold court independently and irregularly.

## WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.

**All Employees appointed** will be subject to civil service regulation (preference will be given to those now in office). They will all be required to do a full day's work. Efficiency methods and records will be installed whereby the worthy will be protected and the drones weeded out.

**The proposed plan** provides for a united school department for the whole county, with uniform standards in educational matters and a fixed program for future expansion and activities. This will reduce the present annual overhead cost as well as increase efficiency.

**Under the efficient** and business methods that will be installed, the "Tax Dollar" will yield one hundred cents to the taxpayer.

**All taxes** will be paid at one time and at one place.

The tax rate will be based on one valuation, determined scientifically by experts competent to value real estate and improvements.

**The proposed charter** abolishes all justice and police courts and creates in their stead a municipal court with five departments. The judges of these departments are prohibited from practicing law within the county, and must devote all their time to the court's business. The court has jurisdiction over the entire county.

## **CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.**

Present transportation facilities are inadequate to supply our wants. The traction companies' lines extend through all the East Bay Cities as far as Haywards.

They are operating under many and various forms of franchises. Some of these franchises run for long and some for short terms. This precludes at this time, or even in the near future, an effective public ownership, should the people desire it.

Under existing conditions, extensions and improvements cannot readily be made, for the reason that the present franchise provisions embarrass the proper financing of such extensions and improvements.

**The water question**, how to get enough water, good water and cheap water for the eastbay communities, is a pressing and important one. Unsatisfactory as the conditions now are, they will in a very short time become acute and the growth of the communities retarded because of inability to secure adequate water service.

The ten separate cities and towns of Alameda county have found that no one of them can properly deal with the problem.

Separate municipalities form artificial divisions preventing, in a great measure, the proper unity of action necessary to a complete success.

## **WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.**

The proposed charter provides a remedy whereby the people, as well as the traction companies, are fully protected in all their rights, yet it makes it possible for the companies to surrender all their existing franchises and in return receive a blanket or single indeterminate franchise covering all their lines and future extensions and improvements. This will greatly facilitate financing.

At the same time, it clears the way and provides a method whereby the people, at any time, may take over the whole system under public ownership at a price that will be fair to both the people and the traction companies. The purchase price will be fixed by the Railroad Commission on the basis of the actual investment wisely and honestly made by the traction companies, less depreciation.

Under the proposed plan of city and county federation a single governmental organization sufficient to handle this and all other community questions is created, and the water question becomes comparatively easy of solution. The proposed charter provides ways and means whereby public utilities, including water, may be taken over and operated under public ownership.

The solution of this question so vitally affecting the well-being, comfort and health of the people should in itself be sufficient justification for the adoption of the proposed new form of government.

## **CONDITIONS UNDER THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF DUAL GOVERNMENT.**

Under present conditions the ballot is long, complicated and mystifying.

At the present time the county is facing a probable increase in taxes to meet the cost of purchasing land and constructing buildings to adequately house county offices, whose functions overlap those of city offices.

The present municipal and county governments of Alameda County are an effort to build, upon a foundation of a worn-out political system, a structure adequate to meet the needs of modern business and social conditions. These dual governments are a failure—unwieldy, expensive and inefficient.

## **WHAT FEDERATION WILL DO UNDER THE PROPOSED CITY AND COUNTY CHARTER.**

Under the proposed plan the ballot will be short, simple and intelligible.

Under the proposed plan the purchase of additional land and the construction of new buildings to house county offices would be unnecessary. Oakland's beautiful city hall and auditorium would become available immediately for county, as well as city purposes.

The new city and county charter will give us a system of government that has been scientifically worked out in the light of experience and adapted to meet the requirements of modern economic, industrial and social conditions. Politics and spoils are replaced by policies and efficiency. The interest and welfare of the few give way to the good of the many.

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